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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0838
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0004
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3169
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000196

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NEA/ARP, KOSOVO MONITORING GROUP, NEA/I, EUR

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TAGS: PREL UN UNMIK PGOV EU KU

SUBJECT: KUWAIT TO RECOGNIZE KOSOVO INDEPENDENCE "THE GCC WAY"

REF: A. STATE 16319

¶B. KUWAIT 172

Classified By: CDA Misenheimer for reasons 1.4 b and d

Summary

¶1. (C) Kuwait will recognize Kosovo independence; but according to the Prime Minister and MFA officials, recognition will be announced through a GCC collective statement. The timing of this statement is unknown, but likely to be within a week. End summary.

Responses to Post's Urgings

¶2. (C) Since February 11, Post has made repeated and concerted efforts to push the GOK on immediately recognizing Kosovo independence. Per ref B., between February 11-14, MFA officials told poloff that the GOK would gauge its support for Kosovo on the international community response to the Kosovo declaration of independence, and further stated that a Kuwaiti statement recognizing Kosovo independence would be issued within three to four days after the declaration.

¶3. (C) CDA took advantage of a February 18 meeting between former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Kuwaiti Prime Minister Shaykh Nasser Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al Sabah to press for immediate Kuwaiti recognition of Kosovo independence. The PM responded that Kuwait would "do it the GCC way." The PM declined to specify or speculate when such a statement might be issued.

¶4. (C) In an earlier luncheon with prominent Kuwaitis, including former Ambassador to the UN and Secretary General of the GCC Abdullah Bishara, A/DCM stressed the importance of immediate Kuwaiti recognition of Kosovo. At one point during the luncheon, former Secretary Albright excused herself to take a call from the Ops Center to congratulate new Prime Minister Hachim Thaci. Upon returning, Albright referred to the call in pressing for immediate GOK recognition of Kosovo.

¶5. (C) Also on February 18, in a meeting with visiting NEA Iraq DAS Butler, MFA U/S Khaled Jarallah echoed the Prime Minister's remarks: a collective statement covering the Kuwait position on Kosovo will be issued by the GCC. He expressed optimism that official recognition would take place and added that the Albanians are "good people who deserve international recognition." He noted the Albanian Government's appeal for GOK support during the Kuwaiti PM's

visit to Albania several months ago.

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